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Paving The Road For SEO Success: Closing The Door On Microsites

Melissa Walner | Director, Global SEO

Hilton Worldwide

@MelissaWalner

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Leading The World Of Hospitality For Nearly 100 Years



1919 – First hotel opens in Cisco, Texas



1943 – First hotel chain to go coast-to-coast in the US



1959 – Pioneered the airport hotel concept at SFO



1970 – First NYSE-listed company to enter the domestic gaming business

"The best way to stay ahead in the hotel business is to stay ahead of other people in the hotel business."
Barron Hilton

We're introducing a new world of color at Hilton. Dressing our people, and our services, in every color of the rainbow: From Doorman to Pastry Chefs. From Bellmen to Maids.

It's a new way of showing our pride in our people and our services. A new warm atmosphere, and a bright new way of saying, "Be My Guest."

But color is only a part of the story. The new service innovations you have come to expect of Hilton are also here. When you travel, enjoy the colorful world of Hilton. Call your local Hilton Reservation Service, or your travel agent.

Come Visit The Hiltons. X

1973 – Developed first reservation system using computer technology

THANKS A MILLION
WE LIKE YOU, TOO.

150+ PROPERTIES. 80 COUNTRIES.
MORE THAN 1 MILLION LIVES.

Hilton Hotels & Resorts
1,001,000+ likes - 10,000+ talking about this - 6,440,000 were here

2013 – First hotel brand in the world to earn more than one million Facebook likes.

It happens at the Hilton

Make a Reservation

- Home & Availability
- Hotels, Resorts & Casinos
- Meetings & Groups
- Programs & Packages
- Hilton HHonors®
- Special Offers & Value Rates
- Hilton Grand Vacations
- Company Information

1,000 HHonors® Bonus Points!
Earn 1,000 HHonors® Bonus points for reservations made through Hilton.com! Just enter your HHonors account number when confirming your booking. Reservations must be made by October 31, 1999 and your stay must take place by December 31, 1999.

Business & Breakfast in Guadalajara!
With direct access to "Expo", the Hilton Guadalajara is the ideal location for the business traveler. Now through January 31, 2000, our special business rate of USD \$90/night includes one full breakfast daily!

Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort
October starts off with events from the symphony orchestra to the International Raceway. Of course world famous beachside activities are just footsteps away. Rooms start at just USD \$69 per room per night. Click here for details.

Hilton Summer Travel News

Hilton Vancouver Airport, TRIPLE Airlines miles. Click here.

Go globe with a Hilton! Arcadial Paradise Asia from \$79 per room per night.

1995 – Debut of Hilton.com made Hilton Hotels an industry pioneer on the web.

THE ROAD TO SUCCESS LEADS UPHILL



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Our Top 5 SEO Hurdles

- Site Architecture & Infrastructure
- CMS/Duplicate Content Issues
- Inconsistent NAP Citations
- Training & Education
- Hotel Microsites

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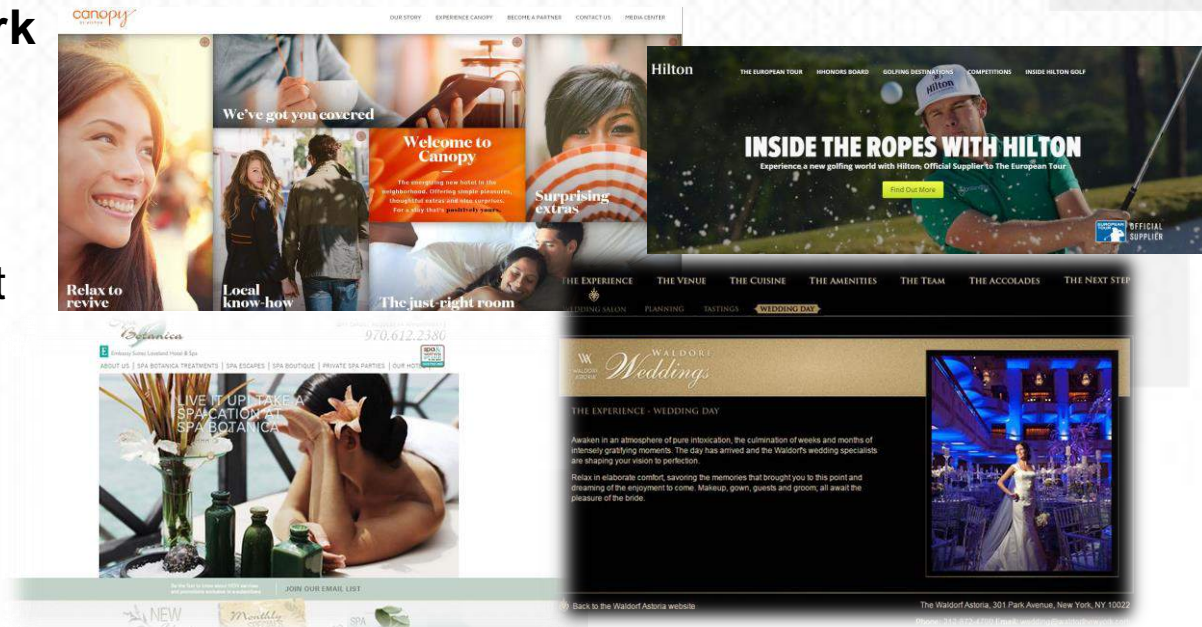


Defining Microsites

A microsite is a standalone web page or site that is used to provide information about and/or promote something separately from a business's parent website.

Where Microsites Can Work

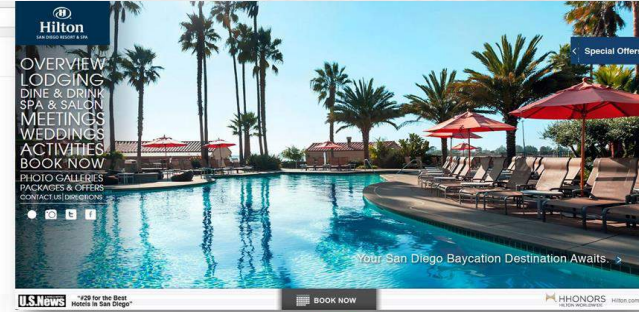
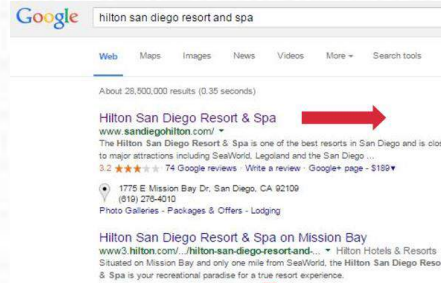
- Short term promotional campaigns
- New product launches
- Foreign language content offerings for International customers
- Marketing to a business segment with a different target audience.



The Trouble With Microsites

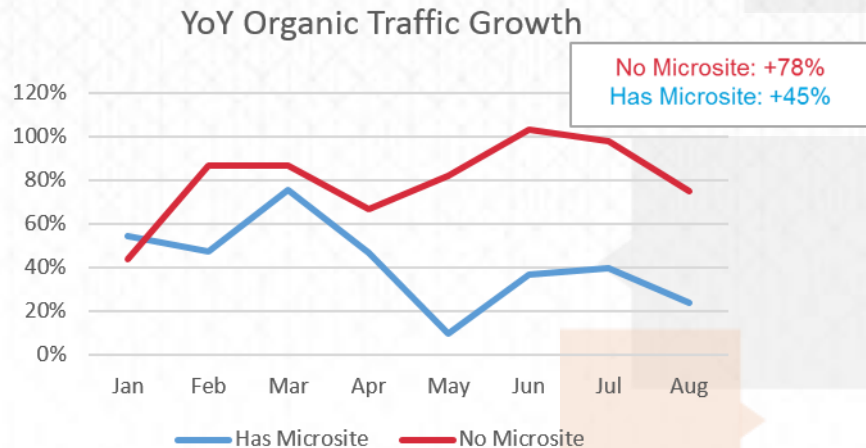
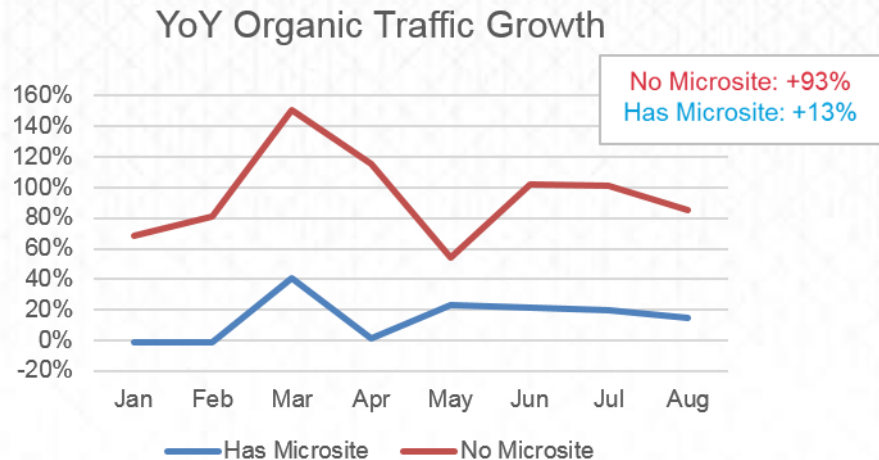
If not carefully executed, microsites can have a negative impact on performance – particularly for organic search.

- Compete in SERPs with the corporate website.
- Diminish link equity and social signals.
- Contribute to inconsistent NAP issues.
- Dilute brand identity and confuse customers.
- Create a disorienting user experience.
- Eliminate cross-sell opportunities.



Impact On Organic Traffic Growth

Sample of 4 Full-Service Hilton Worldwide Hotels in the NYC Market



Summary: NYC hotels without a microsite experience higher YoY growth in organic search traffic than the hotels with microsites.

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Taking Two Bites From One Apple Is Risky Business



Even though the wording is different, most of these microsites are simply repackaging information found on the hotel's corporate website.

- Both sites rank for the same queries, so they are visible within the same set of search results.
- May appear as though the goal is to drive out competition by saturating the SERP's.

Hotels in San Diego - Hilton San Diego Bayfront
www3.hilton.com/.../hilton-san-diego...SANCCH... Hilton Hotels & Resorts
Reserve your stay at this hotel in San Diego, located next to the San Diego Convention Center and just across from Petco Park and the Gaslamp Quarter.
Amenities and Services - Rooms & Suites - Hotel Details - Maps & Directions

Hilton San Diego Bayfront Brand Site

Hilton San Diego Resort & Spa on Mission Bay
www3.hilton.com/.../hilton-san-diego...SANHIH... Hilton Hotels & Resorts
Situating on Mission Bay and only one mile from SeaWorld, the Hilton San Diego Resort & Spa is your recreational paradise for a true resort experience.

Hilton San Diego Mission Bay Brand Site

Hilton San Diego Mission Valley Hotel
www3.hilton.com/.../hilton-san-diego...SANMV... Hilton Hotels & Resorts
Come visit the newly-renovated Hilton San Diego Mission Valley hotel and enjoy kid-friendly accommodations, ample meeting space and a prime location.

Hilton San Diego Mission Valley Brand Site

Hilton San Diego Resort | Luxury Family Resort in San Diego
www.sandiegohilton.com/
The Hilton San Diego Resort & Spa is one of the best resorts in San Diego and is close to major attractions including SeaWorld, Legoland and the San Diego ...

Hilton San Diego Mission Bay Microsite

Hilton San Diego Bayfront: San Diego Hotels
www.hiltonsandiegobayfront.com/ Hilton San Diego Bayfront
Have you been searching high and low in San Diego for Wedding Venues? For a flawless wedding, look no further than the Hilton Hotel at San Diego's Bayfront!

Hilton San Diego Bayfront Microsite

Hilton Mission Valley San Diego Hotel | Hotels in Mission ...
www.hiltonmv.com/
The Hilton San Diego Mission Valley Hotel is surrounded by an array of dining, shopping and entertainment options, meaning you won't have to travel far to get ...

Hilton San Diego Mission Valley Microsite

Hilton San Diego Resort & Spa - TripAdvisor
www.tripadvisor.com San Diego Hotels TripAdvisor LLC
★★★★☆ Rating: 4 - 2,197 reviews - Price range: \$\$
Book Hilton San Diego Resort & Spa, San Diego on TripAdvisor: See 2197 traveler reviews, 671 candid photos, and great deals for Hilton San Diego Resort ...

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The Big Debate – Is It A Doorway Or Not?

With SEO, there is always a bit of “reading the tea leaves” that takes place.

- Recent Google updates elevated concern that these microsites **may** carry the risk of being perceived as a version of a doorway page.
- Only Google knows for sure what constitutes a doorway page. But even a miniscule amount of risk was not worth the potential loss.



Closing The Door On Microsites

While some microsites have driven incremental value, in most cases they end up being a competitor to the hotel's own visibility and sales.



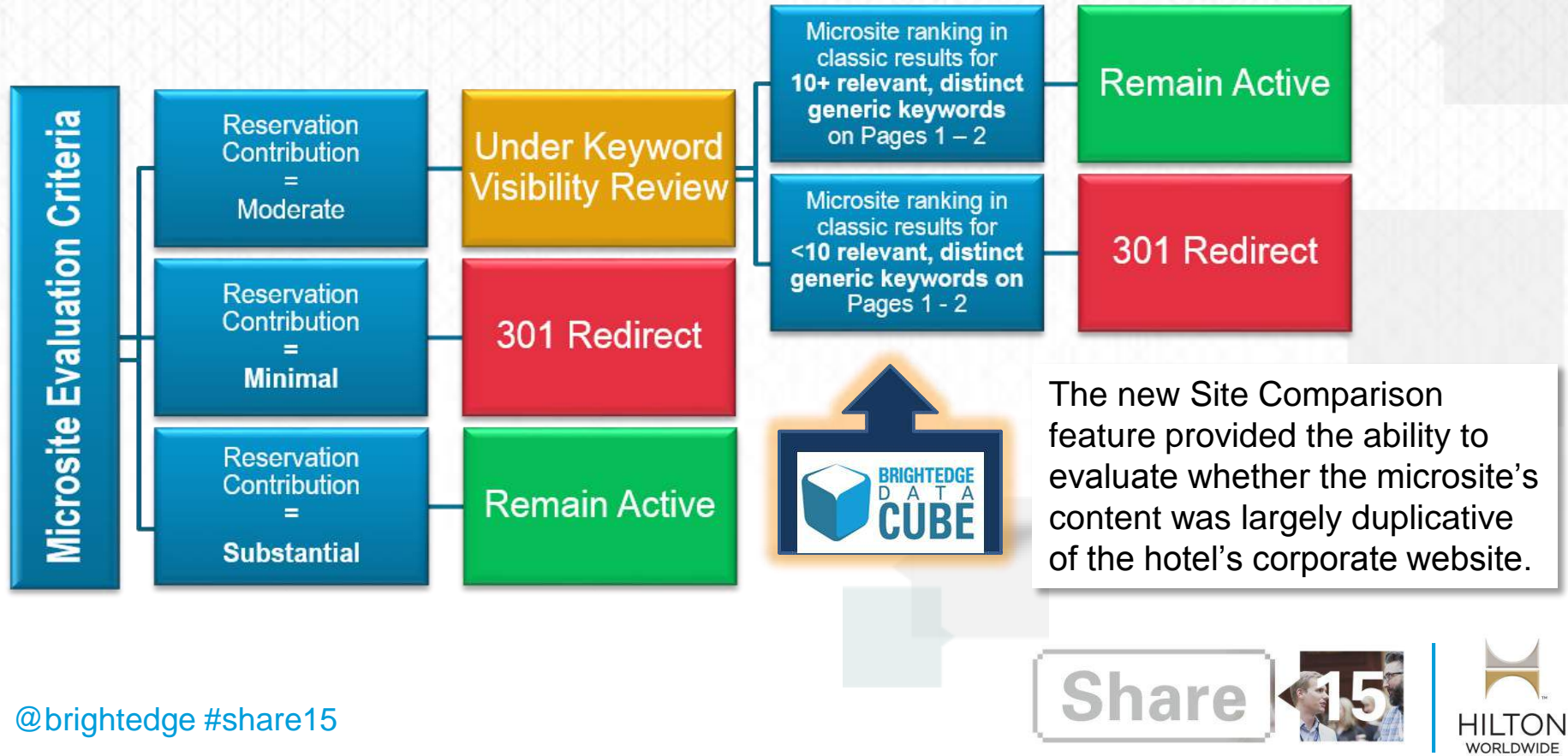
In order to protect our most valuable digital asset (Hilton.com) and grow the organic search channel, we developed an objective two-step approach for retiring many of these microsites.

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Leveraging the BrightEdge Data Cube



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Analyzing Keyword Relevancy and Distinction

If Google is unable to find a substantial amount of differentiated content on the microsite, it will show in what keywords it's being ranked for.

Data Cube

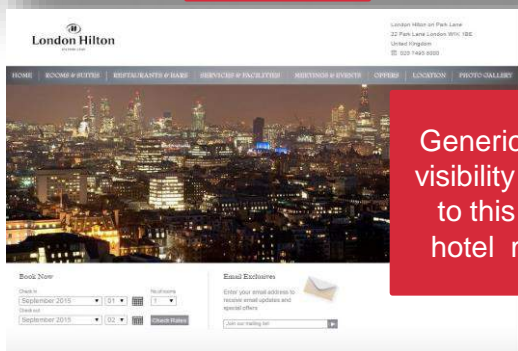
Leverage the industry's largest and actionable content repository to develop winning strategies for your business.

Google GB hilton.com

Overview High Ranking Keywords Long Tail Keywords Content Strategies Site Comparison

Compare against:

Content Performance **Keyword Gap Analysis**



Generic keyword
visibility exclusive
to this London
hotel microsite

Displaying keywords ranked on <http://www.parklanehilton.com/> but not on Hilton.com

Month of Jul 2015 (compared to Month of Jun 2015) Select Different Periods

Track	Columns	Keyword	Blended Rank	Blended Rank Change	Page	Search Volume	Category
<input type="checkbox"/>		chocolate afternoon tea london	16	2 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/photo_gallery/image/dining_bars1	880	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		bars with a view london	16	1 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	720	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		london bars with a view	14	1 ▼	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	480	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		grosvenor park lane	18	83 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/photo_gallery	390	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		hotels near hyde park corner	22	79 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/location	90	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		park and suites	16	85 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/suites	90	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		the grosvenor park lane	18	1 ▼	www.parklanehilton.com/suites	90	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		the grosvenor park lane	19	No Change	www.parklanehilton.com/photo_gallery	90	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		bars in london with a view	22	3 ▼	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	70	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		floor bars	23	78 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	70	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		the park hotel london	23	78 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/	70	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		bars with a view in london	15	2 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	50	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		lane bar	18	6 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	50	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		park lane champagne	14	87 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	40	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		panorama bar london	11	2 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	30	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		park lane hotels 5 star	13	2 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/	20	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		champagne bar london view	21	5 ▼	www.parklanehilton.com/bars	10	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		hotels in w1k	16	2 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/	10	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		london hotel spa treatments	19	82 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/spa	10	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		whisky mist photos	19	No Change	www.parklanehilton.com/photo_gallery/image/dining_bars1	10	Regular Web Listing
<input type="checkbox"/>		hyde park events may 2012	18	2 ▲	www.parklanehilton.com/events	0	Regular Web Listing

Show 50 entries Showing 1 to 21 of 21 entries

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Delivering The Redirect Message



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SEARCH ENGINE ROUNDTABLE

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NOVEMBER 18-19 LAS VEGAS

Discover profit-boosting social media tactics
Lowest rates expire next week

Google Bing SEO Yahoo! SEO Other Search Topics More...

Bing SEO Bing Ads Content Ads

More Details On What Google Defines As A Doorway Page

May 13, 2015 • 8:53 am | (37)

by [Barry Schwartz](#) | Filed Under [Google Search Engine Optimization](#)

When Google updated their doorway page algorithm and guidelines it confused webmasters. The definition was not as clear, and honestly, most SEOs still are fuzzy on what a doorway page is.

This is so much so that most SEOs had no clue the new doorway page algorithm actually launched.

This morning I spotted a thread at [Google Webmaster Help](#) where one webmaster was being smart and wanted to 'out' the Hilton hotel for having landing pages for each hotel on the main hilton web site as well as a secondary URL in the format of [hiltoncityname.com](#).

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Top Contributor ETS responded to that, which Google's Eric Kuan from the search quality team marked as the best answer, as follows:

different indexed pages/sites (both are indexed) competing with one another. It would generally make more sense to have one of the URLs go redirecting to the other - and making one strong site instead of two.

So maybe use this as your doorway page definition even though it isn't described too well in the help docs.

Forum discussion [Google Webmaster Help](#).

Google Doorway Page Algorithm Update: Action Plan for Hotel Vanity Websites

May 14, 2015

Share Tweet Facebook LinkedIn

By Max Starkov and Asher Fusco

Advertising and Marketing Blog

Will Your Hotel's Vanity Website Affect How You're Viewed in Search?

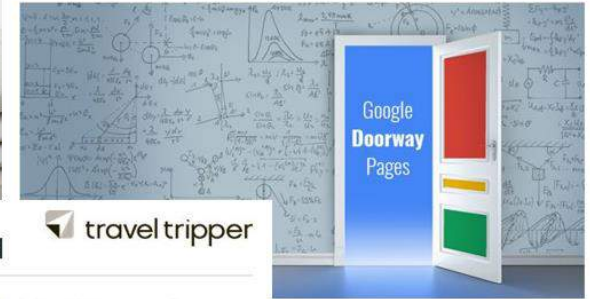


Will The Google Doorway Page Update Penalize My Independent Hotel Website And My Brand?

Posted in [Hotel Online Marketing](#) on June 12, 2015 by [Matt Bitzer](#)

Google Doorway Pages vs. Independent Hotel Websites – Explained

Published: May 20, 2015



Hotel Vs. Brand Websites: SEO Friends or Foes?

Travel Tripper + Skift

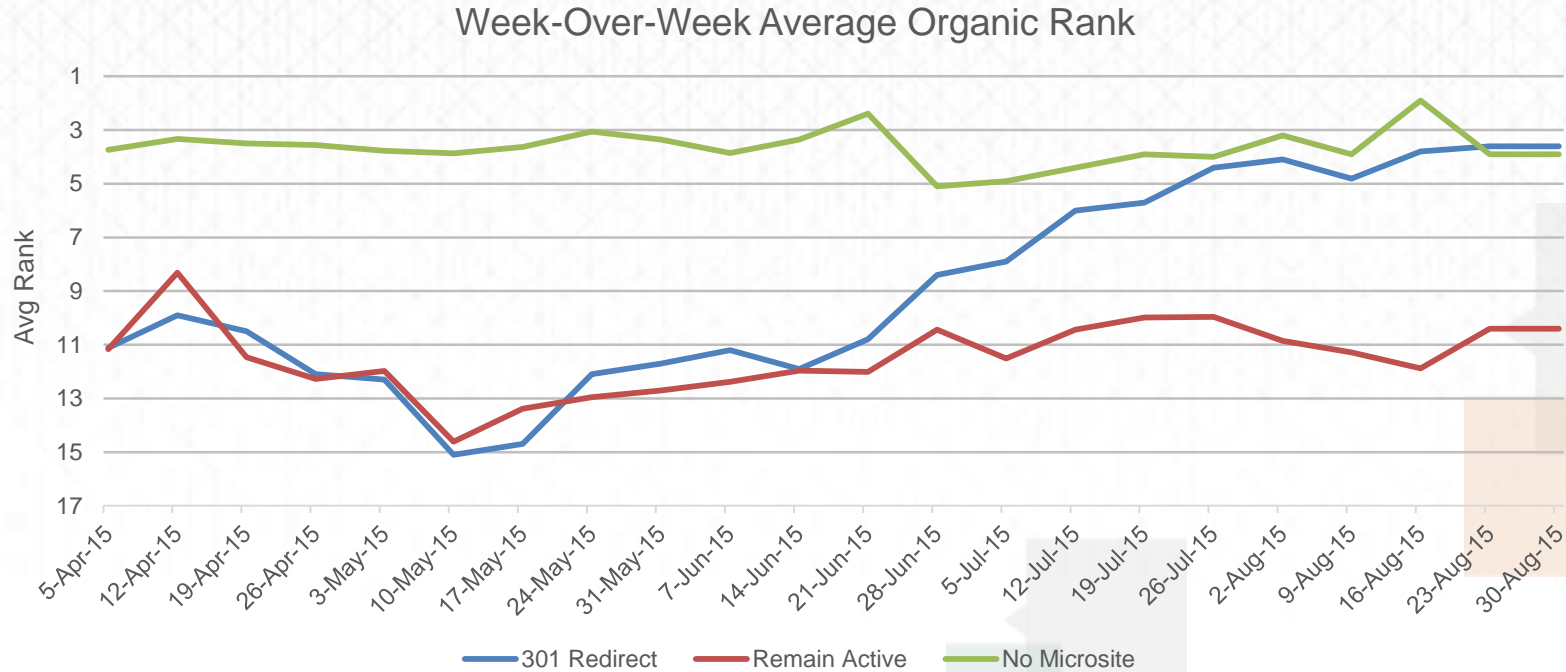
Jun 30, 2015 4:52 pm

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Progress To Date



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To Microsite, Or Not? Key Considerations

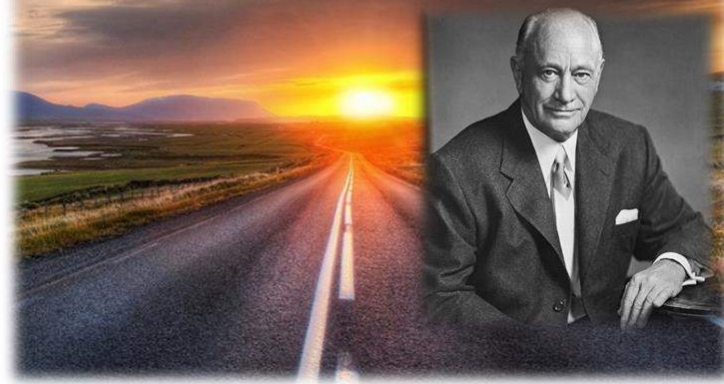
When it comes to SEO, there is greater reward in focusing your efforts on one primary website. But if a microsite is a must-have, keep the following in mind to avoid the pitfalls.

- Target audience should be very narrow and specific – *NOT* the same audience as your primary website.
- Will require dedicated resources to maintain, plus a separate marketing plan and goals.
- Avoid the “digital whiplash” effect of sending users back-and-forth between the microsite and your primary site.
- Establish best practice guidelines for microsites. Have a solid plan in place for their governance and maintenance.

Takeaways For The Road Ahead

- **HAVE PATIENCE.** SEO is a marathon, not a sprint.
- One team, or even one person, can have a serious impact on an organization.
- Believe in your vision, be willing to take risks and don't back down.
- Roadblocks and miles of red-tape are common in enterprise SEO. Don't get discouraged – embrace the challenges you have ahead.

"Success seems to be connected with action. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit" – Conrad Hilton



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